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Senator John Cornyn
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Senator Patrick Leahy
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Dear Senators Cornyn & Leahy:

I am writing to express my support for your efforts to bring more transparency to the operations of federal agencies. Today, almost 40 years after the Freedom of Information Act first became law, many government agencies remain resistant to the principle of public oversight that FOIA sought to embody. As a frequent requester of agency records, the Electronic Privacy Information Center has encountered many obstacles in its efforts to obtain information on a wide range of government activities, often requiring the intervention of the courts to vindicate our right of access. I am hopeful that your efforts will help to remove such obstacles.

As you proceed to address deficiencies in agency administration of FOIA, I urge you to carefully consider the problem of processing delays, which appear to be endemic and have long frustrated the intent of the law. Indeed, I believe that the delay problem is so ingrained that it may require the kind of in-depth, extended examination that an advisory committee of experts could best provide. I would be pleased to discuss this matter in more detail with members of your staffs.

Thank you again for your bi-partisan efforts to improve our system of open government. This is a principle that all Americans clearly support.

Sincerely,



David L. Sobel